Stone's 'JFK' called 'big lie'

By Roger Munns
Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa — Oliver Stone's new movie "JFK," the story of a conspiracy in President Kennedy's assassination, is "a big lie that would make Adolf Hitler proud," said a top investigator for the Warren Commission.

Stone

David Belin said Stone deliberately overlooks evidence that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone when he killed Kennedy and a Dallas policeman.

"I didn't specifically say that Oliver Stone is an assassination whore," Belin said. "I'm saying I would lay out the facts and let a jury decide whether this is artistic license or whether it is a prostitution of the assassination by deliberately telling lies."

Stone responded that Belin was a name-calling "frustrated prosecutor."

"In spite of his bitterness, I wish he had not talked in terms of Hitler and prostitutes. The American people would be better served by a discussion of issues raised by 'JFK,'" said Stone, who has directed "Platoon" and "The Doors."

Belin, a senior partner in one of Des Moines' largest law firms, previewed the film last week. The movie opens nationally Dec. 20.

He was one of two Warren Commission attorneys assigned to investigate who shot Kennedy and Officer J.D. Tippit on Nov. 22, 1963.

The commission — headed by Earl Warren, then chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court — concluded Oswald committed both crimes. Two days later, Oswald was killed by Jack Ruby, who the commission said also acted on his own.

In the movie, Kevin Costner plays Jim Garrison, once a New Orleans district attorney who prosecuted a businessman on charges he conspired to kill Kennedy. After a two-year investigation and a 34-day trial, a jury took less than an hour to acquit the businessman.

Garrison maintains he was right, and Stone has said the government sabotaged the prosecution.

"The common denominator with all of the conspiracy movies, including 'JFK,' is that Ruby was the final act of the conspiracy. That's why they never show Postal Inspector Harry Holmes," Belin said.

Belin interviewed Holmes during the commission's investigation.

Holmes said he showed up unexpectedly at the Dallas police station on the Sunday after Kennedy was killed. At the investigators' invitation, he spent about half an hour questioning Oswald. On his way to another cell after that interview, Oswald was shot by Ruby.

Minutes earlier, Ruby had been in a nearby Western Union office. A time stamp placed him there at 11:17 a.m.

"If Harry Holmes would have just continued on to church that morning, the interrogation session would have ended and Oswald would have been transferred long before Jack Ruby ever got to the Western Union office," Belin said. "Obviously if Jack Ruby had been part of the conspiracy, he would have been downtown at least a half-hour earlier."

Belin said conspiracy theorists dismiss Ruby's denial of a plot and the lie detector test he took.